

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Friends and Colleagues,

For TDEC's Office of External Affairs, 2021 was another year of having to adapt, be nimble, and be open-minded about solutions to fulfill customer needs and how that might look in a sometimes virtual environment.

Relationships are the backbone of the OEA team and I'm proud of our efforts this year to keep cultivating those, even in times of physical isolation. After several postponed events, Jan Compton led the TNEC in the first ever all-virtual format and John LeCroy developed a new public participation plan that incorporated a virtual component that has improved our community outreach. In West Tennessee, Rudy Collins continued to be an asset for the region, by helping facilitate and secure a major business development opportunity in Lake County.

Over the past year, OEA facilitated 179 hybrid public hearings and meetings, assisted 2,015 stakeholders, supported city and county mayors on a variety of issues with 810 mayoral interactions, supported 506 park initiatives and requests for assistance, had 265 interactions with TNECD where the team assisted numerous projects and requests, facilitated 135 stakeholder conversations, and supported the department with 171 legislative interactions.

I look forward to the continued innovation of the OEA team as we forge ahead in 2022. Thank you for allowing us to assist you.

- Ronné Adkins, Director of TDEC's Office of External Affairs



## OEA 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

The Office of External Affairs has spearheaded Hybrid Public Participation for TDEC in 2021 resulting in more community involvement than ever before. **Hybrid meetings** provide for both in-person and virtual participation, expanding opportunities to engage communities in the department's decision-making process.

The Offices of External Affairs, Policy and Sustainable Practices, and General Counsel collaborated on three new policies to assist staff with public participation events. The resources are intended to provide guidance and best practices for productive, meaningful, and safe public participation

opportunities to meet the needs of our customers. ■



Hybrid Meeting Selfie - John LeCroy

OEA Regional Director Jan Compton adapted to the pandemic challenges and led the **Tennessee Environmental Conference** executive planning committee to host the first completely virtual conference. The event was postponed in

2020 due to the pandemic.

TDEC's Office of External Affairs played a huge role in the conference by moderating the virtual sessions from across the state. OEA's experience with the virtual process and leadership in conducting meetings created a professional setting for both speakers and attendees. ■



Jan Compton at the 2021 TNEC

The December 7, 2021 announcement that **Sinova Global** would be locating a Silicon metal processing facility in the Lake County Industrial Park was tremendous news for the most distressed county in Tennessee. The initial investment by Sinova Global will be 150 million dollars and will create 140 high paying jobs.

OEA had the opportunity to have a significant role in the process by functioning as TDEC's primary point of contact, facilitating meetings, answering questions and on occasion correcting misinformation about permitting requirements in Tennessee. The interactions between the company, TDEC and local officials were extremely positive and productive. ■

## BY THE NUMBERS

**179** Public Meeting Assists  
**2,015** Customer/Stakeholder Interactions  
**336** Environmental Compliance  
**810** Mayoral Interactions  
**506** Parks Support

**135** Facilitated Conversations  
**265** Economic and Community Development Interactions  
**171** Legislative Interactions

**4417**

OEA  
Actions in  
2021